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## VIRGIL AND THE DRAMA

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“There is perhaps a closer bond of union between Virgil and Euripides than linked him to any other author.” So writes Mr. Glover in his recently published volume of *Studies in Virgil*, in which he has given a vivid and sympathetic account of that poet’s mind and art. And he adds:

Very different men they were, the one as markedly Greek as the other was Roman; one the child of the keenest-witted of all Greek cities, the other a peasant; wide apart in outlook and philosophy, wider still in theology. But the two stand out together as the great exponents in the Greek and Latin world of sorrow and suffering in general, and the misery of men in particular.

And Mr. Glover evidently feels that Virgil in the most interesting part of the *Æneid*, the story of Dido, owes much more to the Phædra and Medea of Euripides than to the *Argonautica*; and he dwells at length on the mental affinities of these two masters of pathos. But he does not proceed to examine the debt of Virgil to the technique of Euripides and the Greek dramatists, a theme on which Heinze has dwelt at some length in his careful and illuminating book entitled *Virgils epische Technik*. As it seems to me that the technical art of the Greek dramatists has influenced Virgil in the composition of the *Æneid* even more profoundly than the characteristics of Medea or Phædra, I shall try here to give some account of its nature and extent, especially as it seems to me possible to proceed a little farther on the lines that Heinze has marked out.

The problem to be solved has been stated in a very striking way by Pope in the preface to his translation of the *Iliad*. There, while conceding to Virgil the palm of judgment, he claims for Homer “the greatest invention of any writer whatever”:

The main story of the *Iliad* is the anger of Achilles, the most short and simple subject that ever was chosen by any poet; yet this he has supplied with a greater, variety of incidents and events, and crowded with a greater number of councils

speeches, battles, and episodes of all lands, than are to be found even in those poems whose schemes are of the utmost latitude and irregularity. The action is hurried on with the most vehement spirit, and its whole duration employs not so much as fifty days. Virgil, for want of so warm a genius, aided himself by taking in a more extensive subject, as well as a greater length of time, and by contracting the design of both Homer's poems into one, which is yet but a fourth part as large as his.

Now, Virgil's choice of a subject for his epic, far from being the sign of a colder genius, seems rather an irrefutable proof that he was kindled by the warmest poetic afflatus. It is the subject dictated to a true poet by the circumstances of his time. Living, as he did, under the protection of the founder of that new and better Rome which was to provide a shelter for the dissemination of Christianity, it is a clear proof of his strength of poetic vision that he chose as the noblest encomium of his patron the tale of Æneas, the founder of the Roman race, the demigod from whom Julius and Augustus boasted their descent. Homer, thinks Pope, such is the wealth of his invention, is able to interest his readers through forty-eight books in two stories, which, when combined by Virgil, sufficed only to carry on this interest through the twelve books of the *Æneid*. For in telling the story of Æneas' settlement in Italy, Virgil is led quite naturally to combine an *Odyssey* with an *Iliad*. In his first six books he tells the tale of Æneas' voyage into the unknown west to seek his new kingdom—a new and richer *Odyssey* telling us of the burning of Troy and of the hapless love of Dido; and in the second half of his poem we have a copy of the *Iliad*, in which he tells of the wars that Æneas waged with the hardy races of Italy before he was permitted to settle there. The design seems the one best suited to the nature of the theme; and the years that elapse during the course of its events, far from being a possible aid to Virgil's invention, seem rather to have been an obstacle for him to overcome in setting vividly before us the toils and sorrows of his hero. Whether Homer deserves the palm for invention or not, is a problem that we find it hard to decide, who know so little about Homer that many of us hesitate to speak of him as an individual. But this is no question of invention on Virgil's part, but rather of judgment in accepting or rejecting the many legends that tradition placed at his disposal. How many of them he rejected, and how interesting some of these

were, it is easy to see from the account of Æneas' journey given by Dionysius. But Virgil, with the instinct of the dramatic artist, felt that those selected for his story must not be merely related to a single, central hero, but that they must mark a progress or development in his fortunes. In the selection and arrangement of the material received by tradition, Virgil seems to have been led by rules belonging to the drama rather than to the epic.

Nor is it difficult to see Virgil's reason for this course. It will not be extravagant to assume that a poet of his erudition was acquainted with Aristotle's *Poetics*. And all readers of that work will remember how in the last chapter Aristotle claims for tragedy a superiority over the epic, and the reason for this claim, τὸ ἐναργὲς ἔχει—"it has vividness of impression." This vividness is not due merely to the dramatic accessories, to the music and the scenery, but is felt in reading it as well as in seeing it represented. Now, this vividness in representation is an effect at which Virgil is constantly aiming, and which in many cases he produces with the greatest success. Take for an example his account of the capture of Troy, and see how he uses its conflagration to light up his picture. From the moment when Æneas, roused by his dream, mounts the housetop and looks out on the house of Deiphobus, "Volcano superante, iam proximus ardet Ucalegon; Sigaea igni freta lata relucet," through the whole story of his vain attempt at rescue and of his flight, this is insisted on. When Venus opens his eyes to the uselessness of further fighting, reminding him of his duty to his father, and revealing to him the hostile deities, we have it again: "Tum vero omne mihi visum considerare in ignes Ilium." Thus Virgil impresses the image of conquered Troy on the mind of the reader as that of an ever-spreading sea of flames. Now, so far as we can judge from the older accounts that have come down to us, he is not following tradition in this. Æschylus, in his *Agamemnon*, makes Clytemnestra picture to herself the Greeks refreshing their weary bodies in Trojan palaces, now that Troy is taken, and no longer are they perishing in the ice-cold camp. And Euripides, in the *Troades*, represents Troy as being set on fire only after the captives and plunder have been removed to a place of safety—the reasonable course for the victors to follow, for by firing the town at once they would destroy not only their

plunder, but some of their own men. But on the effectiveness of the picture presented to Virgil—its *ἐνάργεια*—I need not insist further.

Are there any other signs in the *Æneid* of this striving after dramatic effect? Compare for a moment its ending with that of the *Iliad*. It is in the twenty-second book of the *Iliad* that Hector is slain by Achilles, and yet the story goes on for two books and more. We have the mourning of the Trojan women, the funeral of Patroclus with its games, and, last and most moving of all, the coming of Priam to the tents of Achilles and that picture of the old man's appeal: "I have endured what none other man on earth hath endured before, to stretch forth my hand toward the face of the slayer of my sons." Hector's body is returned to Priam, borne back to Troy, and, after the threefold lament of Andromache, Hecuba, and Helen, is laid on the funeral pyre. Next morning they quench the flames and gather the bones for burial in the mound. "Ὡς οἱγ' ἀμφίεπον ταφον Ἑκτορος ἵπποδάμοιο. We all feel the pathos and nobility of the closing scene, but it is the ending of the epic rather than of the drama. Compare it with that of the *Æneid*. Turnus is wounded and begs for quarter in the name of his aged father, and Æneas, touched by his piety, is inclined to grant it, when he sees on his breast the baldric of Pallas. Then comes the cry of vengeance: "Art thou to slip from my hands, clad as thou art in spoils of my friends? Pallas it is, Pallas, that now strikes the sacrifice and exacts vengeance in thy guilty blood." And with the death-blow the poem ends. It is the transference, thinks Heinze, of dramatic technique to the epic. Just as in the *Oedipus Rex* the play closes with the blinding of the king and we hear nothing of his subsequent banishment, so here we are told nothing of the wedding of Æneas and the founding of Lavinium. Enough that with the death of Turnus the last obstacle to these has been removed.

Now, the power to produce striking dramatic effects is one thing; another and quite a different thing is the power that creates for us characters so vivid and real that, after they are presented to us, we seem to have lived with them and think of them as friends or foes for the rest of our lives. And it is in this power that Virgil seems to me to fall farthest short of Homer. What a wealth of characters Homer

presents to us in the *Iliad*—the proud Agamemnon, the crafty Ulysses, the fiery Diomedes, the sapient Nestor—to linger for a moment in the tents of the Greeks. Of his women we have but glimpses; but what wife can surpass Andromache? And how subtle is the charm that encircles Helen as she appears to the Trojan warriors? But these are his minor characters; to quote Mr. Clark:

It is Achilles and Hector that affect us most. We admire Achilles' manliness, his ebullieny, his haughty self-righteousness, his dogged, but not quite tearless, resignation, and his tender gentility. We love Hector's patriotism, his moral manliness; we admire the father, the husband, the hope and bulwark of his race. What a testimony to the worth of Hector and to the impartiality of the poet are the three laments that close the *Iliad*! Andromache misses the tender word he had left unspoken, Hecuba exults in the favor shown to her dead son by the gods, and Helen, Helen remembers his chivalry.<sup>1</sup>

We feel at once, when we compare the *Æneid* with the *Iliad* in this respect, that Virgil is at a hopeless disadvantage. Not that we would entirely deny to him the creative power that Homer shows in so much higher degree. Very lifelike and noble are the characteristics of Pallas, of Lausus, of Mezentius, and even of Turnus. But when we turn to the comparison of Æneas, we feel a sense of monotony and lack of distinction. Achates is *fidus*, Serestus is *fortis*, but how little they are individualized! They are, thinks Mr. Glover, copies of the Romans that made the empire, "men of little individual 'physiognomy,' but of a high average capacity, every one of them gifted by nature with the instinct, *ἀρχειν καὶ ἀρχεσθαι*." But Virgil's fame in this respect will always depend on his creation of Dido and Camilla. The latter, thinks Mr. Myers, is drawn for us by a lover's hand, and in her we may feel some indication of the poet's ideal and inward dream; for it was her name that "leapt first of all to Virgil's lips, as he spoke to Dante of their Italy in the under world." It is in his presentation of her that we "realize one of his characteristic charms—his power of concentrating the strangeness and fervor of the romantic spirit within the severe and dignified limits of classical art." And it is in virtue of his presentation of Dido and Camilla "that poems, that were accepted as soon as published as the standard of Latin classicality, became afterward the direct or indirect original of half the Renaissance epics of adoration and love." True as this

<sup>1</sup> *History of Epic Poetry.*

is, we find it difficult to think of Æneas as the model *preux chevalier*. For if any one thing lowers Æneas in the regard of modern youth, and makes him despicable as a hero, it is his treatment of Dido, and the utter lack of chivalry and of this feeling for romance that he displays; and the unfortunate epithet of *pius*, with the meaning it conveys to the average boy, when he first makes Æneas' acquaintance, has completed the catastrophe.

"Unity of plot," says Aristotle, "does not consist in the unity of the hero." Nor does it, we might add, imply or require unity of the hero. I suppose there always will be a diversity of opinion as to whether Achilles or Hector is the real hero of the *Iliad*. But Virgil's plot implied a single hero; and the relation of his character and exploits to the virtue most needed in the Roman of Virgil's day led Virgil to sum up his merits in the epithet *pius*. The Æneas of the legends had shown his *pietas* by the rescue of his aged father from burning Troy. What had all but overthrown Rome in Virgil's youth and driven Virgil himself a landless fugitive from his farm were the *impia bella* for freedom from which the Romans gladly bartered their liberty. But the epithet *pius* conveys a very different meaning to the average man of our time. Charles James Fox, in a letter to his friend Trotter, says:

Though the detached parts appear to me equal to anything, the story and characters appear more faulty every time I read it. My chief objection (I mean that to the character of Æneas) is of course not so much felt in the first three books; but afterwards he is always either insipid or odious; sometimes excites interest against him, and never for him.

"And," he adds in a postscript, "even in the first book Æneas says: 'Sum pius Æneas, fama super aethera notus.' Can you bear this?" Dr. Henry, who quotes him, answers for Trotter, "Yes, why not?" and breaks into a tirade against the insincerity of modern Christians in their professions of humility. "Æneas, in Mr. Fox's opinion, should not have so plainly told the truth, should have prevaricated, whined about his unworthiness, and, like the tiara'd *servus servorum*, by whom he has been succeeded, professed himself the obedient servant at command of whomever pleased to command him." What does *pius Aeneas* mean? "It is," he replies, "Æneas the tender-hearted, the gentle knight of chivalrous times." And

again in a note on *Æneid*, I, 18, "insignem pietate virum," he devotes about twelve pages to a definition of *pietas*. I must abridge, of course; and the primary sense of *pietas* seems to me that given in his first quotation (*Cic. pro Planc*, 33), "Quid est pietas nisi voluntas grata in parentes?" Primarily it is the affection one should feel for his father and mother; from them it is extended to all members of the family or *gens*; then to the nation and the nation's gods; and, last of all, to all members of the human race. It is not always gentle; what is one's feeling for the men who have slain his brothers? Take Deiphobus' words in *Æneid*, VI, 530:

Di talia Graiis

Instaurate, pio si poenas ore reposco.

Nor is it always mistranslated by our word "pious;" in Cicero we read "de pietate adversus deos;" and when Lucretius tells Memmius men will call his teaching "impia rationis elementa," he can only mean the opposite of our word "pious." When he opposes to this the "impia facta religionis," as exemplified in the sacrifice of Iphigenia, he is opposing to the later, and derived, the older meaning of the word.

But what was in Virgil's mind when he adopted this as the standing epithet for his hero? Think of Jove's prophecy about the race which is to spring from the union of Ansonian and Trojan blood: "Supra homines, supra ire deos pietate videris." The auxiliary gods, that fought at Thebes and Ilium on each side, were hardly models of fraternal unity. But surely the Romans, during the long and bloody history of their civil strife, had been far less so. When had Romans shown such piety? Macaulay thinks in his *Lays* of "the brave days of old." But Virgil's *pium desiderium*, which was so far from being realized in the past history of Rome, was, he hoped, to find its fruition in the blissful years that were coming under the sway of Augustus, the golden age of the *Pax Romana*. This is the point of contact between his story and the strife that closed at Actium; his *pious Aeneas* is the antithesis of the impious Roman who leagued himself with the Egyptian queen to overthrow his sister's city. And so far as this quality is temporal in its application, while it increased the immediate effect of the poem, it fails to produce a like effect on men of another time, who under different conditions no longer felt, as Virgil felt, the need of this virtue of *pietas*. This, then, seems



an element in the character of Virgil's hero which, while appealing with especial power to Romans of that day, must, with the change of times and their needs, lose that power.

But, to return to the structure of the *Æneid*, in each of its books Virgil seems to have aimed at presenting to us a dramatic action proceeding on a definite system and in many respects complete in itself. Heinze notices how in several of the books the end is a sort of echo of the beginning, giving us with the same characters or surroundings a reversal of their fortune. Take the fourth book, for example, and compare the initial dialogue between Dido and Anna, who encourages her sister to give way to her passion for Æneas, and the ending, where Anna hurries in to find her sister dying as the result of having yielded to her counsel. At the beginning of the fifth, we find Æneas at sea, but threatened by a storm; at its close he is again at sea, but the waters are calm, and a fair wind is bearing him to Italy. So in the first, the banquet at its close is a vivid contrast with the storm with which it opens. And of the different dramas thus presented to us the heroes are often different. Æneas is the hero of this poem, but in the fourth book the leading character is Dido, with whom the book opens and closes. So with Turnus in the ninth; in the fifth the center of interest is the dead Anchises; and if the eleventh has a leading rôle, it is surely that of Camilla.

But the epic differs from the tragedy in the time occupied by its series of actions. How far, then, has Virgil succeeded in reducing each of the twelve actions he has selected to illustrate Æneas' journey and settlement to the limits of time usual in a tragedy? In seven of the twelve books the time required for the action is little, if at all, over twenty-four hours. In the fifth and the eleventh we have pauses intervening; in the fifth, that of nine days intervening between the sacrifice at Anchises' tomb and the games; in the eleventh, a truce of twelve days for the burial of the dead. Virgil handles both of these pauses with such skill that they are not felt as retarding the progress of the action. Different in nature and indefinite in length are the pauses passed over with slight mention in the fourth and seventh books—books that present a noteworthy parallelism in their structure. In the beginning of the fourth book we have the conversa-

tion between Dido and Anna, who is persuaded by her sister to give free rein to her love for Æneas. Next morning comes the hunting party, and all seems to favor the fulfilment of Juno's plan. So in the seventh, after Æneas' landing, he meets with Latium, and a treaty and the marriage of Æneas and Lavinia are arranged, and Jupiter's plans for Æneas seem on the eve of fulfilment. Then follows an indefinite gap in the action in each book. At the close of this in the fourth, coincident with the prayer and sacrifice of Iarbas, Jupiter sends Mercury down from heaven to Æneas and baffles Juno's purpose. So in the seventh, after the pause, Juno calls Allecto up from the shades, and for the time being throws Jupiter's plans into confusion. But there is one book, the third, the action of which requires, not hours and days, but months and years for its fulfilment; and it seems significant of Virgil's fondness for dramatic technique in developing his poem that to all appearance this book was the last composed by him, and is generally felt to be of all his Æneids the least successful. He seems to have felt it to be a very difficult task to treat Æneas' voyage westward in such a way as to give it interest and progress, and a study of his treatment of it is very interesting.

Though Virgil could not have felt that there was any lack of material to work upon here, yet the material he had was not at all of the character fitted for a poetic narrative. We have most of it in the first book of Dionysius' *Ἀρχαία Ρωμαϊκά*. Here it is merely an enumeration of the various stages in Æneas' progress westward; he stops, founds a town called by his name, or by the name of some members of his party, and proceeds to another stage. An artist like Virgil felt the need of some definite plan, some idea of progress to lend interest to such a narrative. Such a plan seems to have developed slowly in Virgil's mind and to have led to his postponing the completion of this book to the last. He omits many of the halts enumerated by Dionysius—that in Arcadia and that at Dodona, for instance—and he endeavors by a succession of oracles received by Æneas to show how he started in ignorance of his destined goal, and how this question was gradually cleared up for him by oracles received in the course of his journey. Apollo and his activity form the center of divine help for Æneas in this book, as opposed to all

the others; and probably this is the reason why Virgil does not conduct his hero to Dodona. In harmony with this, the stop at Actium and the erection of Æneas' trophy there form a sort of center for the book. Heinze notices the following five oracles, which bring before Æneas with increasing clearness the goal for which he is bound: (1) He is induced to leave the Troad by omens bidding him seek distant places of exile in western lands. He crosses to Thrace, but there the voice of Polydorus bids him "flee the cruel lands—flee the greedy shore;" and he sails on to Delos, praying Apollo for an enduring dwelling. (2) At Delos the god bids him seek his ancient mother, and, guided by Anchises, he turns back to Crete, where is Mount Ida, the cradle of the race. (3) He settles there, but a pest falls on the settlers; and by the light of the moon, as he lies sleepless, the Trojan Penates, which he is bearing with him, give him a new message from Apollo, directing him to Italy as the true mother of the race, the land whence sprang Dardanus. (4) He proceeds to the Strophades, where he hears from the Harpies the prophecy that he and his will find no home, till in dire hunger they are driven to eat their tables—a prophecy that chills their blood with sudden fright, and which Heinze illustrates by a comparison with the oracles given to Phalanthus, the founder of Tarentum, that he will found a town where he finds it rain 'υπ' αἴθρα, which he takes to mean "under a clear sky." But one day, as he lies with his head on his wife's lap, sorrowing for the town he can never found, as her tears of sympathy bedew his face, he remembers that she is called Aithra, and recognizes the fulfilment of the oracle; the next day he captures Tarentum. You will remember how the dread of the table oracle is dispelled by a fulfilment similarly facile. (5) After the halt at Actium he proceeds to Buthrotum, where he finds Andromache and Helenus. Helenus bids him seek the west coast of Italy, which is fairly free from Greeks, and tells him of the prodigy of the white sow and her offspring; and so at this stage the goal of Æneas' journey is as plainly brought before him as was possible without names, and he is to get further information from the Cumæan Sibyl. Let me call attention here to the alternations of hope and fear involved in this series of events, the dramatic interest in the arrangement of the prophecies. Sad they leave the shores of Thrace and come in

peace to Delos, where the oracle and Anchises' explanation of it fill them with high hope, and, with a favoring wind, 'mid the sailors' cheers, they make for Crete. But the pestilence drives them out, sore against their will, and amid storm and darkness they come to the Strophades, where they are chilled by the oracles about the tables. Helenus' oracle restores their courage, and they sail along the coast of Italy and around Sicily, terrified anew by the thunders of Ætna. The human interest in the book is maintained by the meeting with Andromache, and the rescue of Achæmenides, showing the *pietas* of Æneas, who pities even the comrades of Ulysses, when he finds them in distress. This episode and the stay at Actium have nothing to do with the main theme of the book, the enlightening of Æneas about his destined goal. The story of Achæmenides illustrates the humanity of Æneas, and connects the story of this new *Odyssey* with that of Ulysses' voyage; and the stay at Actium associates the trophy of Æneas with the victory of Augustus, the new Æneas who is founding imperial Rome.

But, it may be asked, why this need of enlightenment? Had not Æneas in memory the speech of Creusa's shade, as she bade him farewell? At the end of the second book he relates to Dido her prophecy, how he is to come to Hesperia and to Lydian Tiber, where a kingdom awaits him and a king's daughter for his wife. But throughout the third book he has no recollection of such a prophecy; and this is one of the problems to be solved in dealing with the composition of the *Æneid*. What reason have we for thinking the third book the last in date of composition? We are told that Virgil in composing his poem first drew up a sort of plan or narrative in prose, and then proceeded to turn it into verse, taking up its parts, not in regular order, but as they suited his fancy. If we regard the speech of Creusa's shade merely, two hypotheses present themselves as possible. Either Virgil composed the third book before the second, and in its composition knew nothing of this speech; and when he came to compose the second book, he was led to put this speech in the mouth of Creusa, and intended in finishing his poem to correct the account given in the third. Many have adopted this view as the one obviously suggested by the absence in the third book of all knowledge of Creusa's speech which immediately precedes its opening.

But it is obvious, too, that it would be very difficult to correct the third book so as to bring it into harmony with this speech, and that it would be much easier to change or omit Creusa's speech. Then it seems reasonable to think that the second was one of the books first composed by Virgil; for we are told that in the year 23 B. C. he read the second, fourth, and sixth books before the imperial family. Virgil began his poem in 29 B. C., and died in 19 B. C., leaving the work unfinished; and it seems reasonable to think that the books he read before the emperor in 23 B. C. were those nearest completion. And certainly of the books of the *Æneid* these mentioned seem the most carefully elaborated. So tradition seems to favor the idea that the second was composed before the third. It is reasonable to assume the same about the seventh, when we compare the prophecy of Celæno in the third with its fulfilment in the seventh. There *Æneas*, startled by the words of Iulus, "Ha, are we eating our tables, too?" remembers that his father Anchises had bequeathed him this prophecy, and there is no word about the Harpy, with her oracle that had chilled their blood and was weighing on their minds with its burden of dire hunger. Then, in the beginning of the eighth, when *Æneas*, plunged in sadness, falls asleep by Tiber's stream, the river-god appears to him in a dream and gives him in detail the prophecy of the white sow, how in thirty revolving years Ascanius is to found Alba. *Æneas*, cheered by the dream, is still more cheered on awaking to find the sow and her brood; but there is not a word of the prophecy of Helenus, and it seems clear from this that Virgil had composed the seventh and eighth books, too, before he set hand to the third. No doubt he intended, after completing the third, to revise the corresponding passages in the seventh and eighth, and to remove the clear contradiction between Creusa's prophecy and the series of oracles in the third. And perhaps we shall best appreciate his sense of the incompleteness of his work, if we suppose that just before his death he had been mainly engaged with the completion of this book, which in its whole story is so clearly at variance with the last notable utterance of the second. The contradiction is so clear that it must have been very vividly present to Virgil's mind, if he was last engaged in the completion of this book; and from this standpoint, it seems to me, we can best understand his reason for ordering the poem to be destroyed.

But what was the principle on which he proceeded in arranging the events in these dramas? Are we to take the third book with its five stages of revelation as an example of his plan, and think of a division of each into five acts? "Which," says Mr. Hugh Platt,<sup>1</sup> "is the stupidest verse in the classics? I should say: 'Neve minor neu sit quinto productior actu Fabula.'" And certainly the measure employed by Horace or Virgil in enumeration or narration is not usually the number five. Let us turn to what seems to me to be in its plot and action the most finished book of the *Æneid*—the second. How many men were there in the wooden horse? Some spoke of hundreds, or even thousands. Tryphiodorus enumerates twenty-two, Quintus thirty, but Virgil nine—three times three; and he enumerates them by threes. "Joyfully issuing from the hollow wood, Thersander and Sthenelus the captains and terrible Ulysses slide down the dangling rope, with Æneas and Thoas and Neoptolemas, son of Peleus, and Macheon first of all and Menelaus and Epeos himself, the artificer of the treachery." Notice how he divides the threes—the last in each set is distinguished—Ulysses, Neoptolemas, Epeos; and the last act is the most distinguished. The number three seems naturally associated with the *peripeteia* or revolution in fortune. First we are introduced to rejoicing or sorrow, as the case may be; then, secondly, the plot advances, with its varied promise of good or ill; leading to, third and last, the struggle that ends in success or failure. The *Iliupersis* or second *Æneid* falls naturally into three parts, which are equal or nearly equal: I, the recapture of the wooden horse and rejoicing (vss. 1–249); II, the *Nyktomacheia*, or combat in the darkness (vss. 250–558); III, the retreat of Æneas (vss. 559–804). An element of uncertainty as to the exact length of the parts is introduced by the supposed spuriousness of the episode of Tyndaris (vss. 566–87). The genuine passage replaced by this may have been longer or shorter. And, by the way, it is perhaps a little curious that Fox in his dispraise of the pious Æneas had forgotten this passage, where Æneas is ready to slay a woman, and a woman who has taken refuge in Vesta's shrine—of all shrines one peculiarly sacred to the Roman.

Furthermore, each of these three divisions seems to me in its

<sup>1</sup> *Alia*, p. 45.

turn to fall naturally into three subdivisions. For I, the reception of the wooden horse, may be divided thus: (1) the discovery of the wooden horse, and the counsel of Laocoon, which, if followed, would have saved Troy (vss. 13-56); (2) the discovery of Sinon and his story (vss. 57-198); (3) the destruction of Laocoon and his sons by the serpents, which confirms the Trojans in their acceptance of Sinon's counsel (vss. 199-249). The first and second subdivisions end with a short epilogue of three and four verses respectively. Then, II, the *Nyktomacheia* may be thus divided: (1) the awakening of Æneas, after the apparition of Hector, by Panthus, and the gathering of a band for the rescue of Troy (vss. 250-369); (2) their first success, and the exchange of shields at the instance of Coroebos, which at first works well, but soon draws down on them the hostility of both parties and leads to their destruction (vss. 340-452); (3) the capture of the palace and the death of Priam (vss. 453-558). The concluding verses of the first and second sections are curiously in conflict with the general course of the action as expressed above, but the four concluding verses of the third mark the completion of the fall of Troy, and so give a picture of its culminating horror. Lastly, III, Æneas' escape, falls into the following divisions: (1) to Æneas, now in fury and despair, Venus reveals the hopelessness of any further struggle, and persuades him to seek his father's house and save the helpless old man (vss. 558-633); (2) he comes to Anchises, whom he finds resolved to remain and perish with his country; but he is shaken in his resolve by the tiara of flame that settles on the head of Iulus, and moved to join Æneas in escaping by the star that points the way—the *auspiciū maximum* (vss. 633-720); (3) the escape of Æneas, the loss of Creusa, and the prophecy of the apparition (vss. 721-804).

Now, when I spoke of the number of Greeks in the wooden horse, I did not intend to use it as an index to the plan of this book; I merely wished to call attention to the importance of the number three in the work of Virgil. And perhaps in doing this, in order to avoid an apparent encroachment of mathematical lore on the sphere of pure literature, you will substitute for the number three the idea of *peripeteia* or dramatic revolution, for it is that for which the number stands here. But there is more to notice. In each of the three sets of three of which I have spoken there is a division longer than the

others—in the first two much longer. These are the finding and speech of Sinon, the storm of the palace and death of Priam, and the determination of Anchises to leave Troy. You may further observe how the butchery of Troy's ancient king forms, as it were, the culmination of the tale of Troy's downfall. The other two are the central subdivisions of Divisions I and II. Each of them has evidently a threefold division, as follows: The episode of Sinon may be divided, and is divided thus by Heinze: (*a*) The appearance of Sinon and his account of his seizure by Calchas, with the aposiopesis at the close:

Donec Calchanti ministro—

Sed quid ego hanc autem nequiquam ingrata resolvo.

. . . . . jamdudum sumite poenas:

Hoc Ithacus velit et magno mercentur Atridae.

The curiosity of his hearers thus aroused, and at their solicitation, (*b*) he proceeds to tell them the story of his condemnation and escape, thus arousing their sympathy. (*c*) Taking advantage of this, he reveals the pretended secret of the purpose of the horse, and, losing interest in him, they at once take measure to insure the salvation of their town by bringing the horse within the walls. And, to turn to the central section of III, we have a threefold division, where, as the *peripeteia* is accomplished by the united effect of (*b*) and (*c*), they are together but little longer than (*a*). We have then: (*a*) Anchises is resolved to remain, but Æneas determines to die with him (vss. 634–70); (*b*) the appearance of Iulus and the crown of fire (vss. 671–91); and (*c*) the star marking the way and the reversal of Anchises' resolve (vss. 692–720).

But the central part of the poem appears to me to be wrought out with the greatest art from this standpoint. Let us trace briefly the threefold divisions of each of its three subdivisions. (1) (*a*) Hector appears and tells Æneas that all struggle is vain; he must flee with the Penates. (*b*) Æneas awakes and Panthus comes with news that Troy is in the hands of the Greeks, and he brings the Penates. (*c*) They pass out together and find themselves joined by many Trojan youths, and hope revives. (2) (*a*) They are successful in their first meeting with the Greeks, and exchange their arms for those of the slain. (*b*) At first the trick succeeds, but in his anxiety to



rescue Cassandra, Croetas betrays the secret to the Greeks. (c) They are assailed by both parties and crushed, Æneas escaping to the citadel with two comrades. (3) (a) The citadel is taken; (b) Priam arms himself to oppose the victors; (c) Polites is slain in his presence, and Priam falls on the body of his son. All this seems hardly the work of chance, and it seems to me that in this book, at any rate, we have Virgil conducting his action through a series of carefully wrought peripeteias or revolutions.

But to conclude: You may remember the saying of Heraclitus, \*ἦθος ἀνθρώπου δαίμων—"A man's character is his guiding star." Sophocles, the most artistic of Greek dramatists, in his most artistic creation, the play of *Œdipus the King*, has given a magnificent illustration of this saying. Œdipus prides himself on his wisdom: Was it not he who solved the riddle of the Sphinx and saved Thebes? Who in Thebes is so clear of mental vision as he? But the course of the play reveals to this man of clear mental vision that he is the blindest man in Thebes: he has murdered his father, and he knows it not; he is married to his mother, and he knows it not; he is ruined by his false pride; and in his despair the poor king puts out the eyes that have served him so ill. So the dramatist tends more and more to make a man's fate depend mainly on his character. Have we any of this dramatic subtlety in Virgil's work? It could be shown in many passages; but perhaps it will be enough to refer you to the episode of Nisus and Euryalus. This is the episode which Virgil puts beside the slaying of Dolon in Homer. A comparison of the two episodes would be most instructive, as showing Homeric breadth of treatment in comparison with Virgilian concentration; but that is not my point. Thirst for glory is what drives Nisus, and with him Euryalus, to try their nocturnal enterprise; and it is thirst for glory, their wish to return "cum spoliis ingenti caede peracta," that leads to their fall. They might have evaded the foe entirely, but, in their thirst for glory, they choose rather to make their way through their midst, and to massacre them overcome with wine and sleep. Nisus succeeds in checking Euryalus' boundless thirst for slaughter, but he is not wise enough to forbid his donning the helm of Messapus, and the gleam of more light on this betrays him to Volcens. When he seeks to flee, his spoils weigh him down, and he falls into the hands

of the foe. Nisus has escaped, and could reach Pallanteum, but his love for his friend brings him back and leads to his destruction. It is no chance, no enmity of the gods, but their own vices and virtues, that lead them to their destruction. "*Sua cuique deus fit dira cupido*," Nisus' careless words when he first addressed his friend, give the keynote of the whole episode, and are an unconscious prophecy of their fate.